



PCB 3044 Principles of Ecology

Section 2

Fall 2020 Syllabus

College of Science, Dept. of Biology

Instructor Information

- Instructor: Dr. Melinda Donnelly
 - Office Location: Discussion Board on Webcourses
 - Office Hours: M and W: 4:30-5:50 pm (schedule subject to change and will be posted on Webcourses)
 - Email: Melinda.Donnelly@ucf.edu
- Undergraduate Teaching Assistant: Cristina Lingway
 - **Email Policies:** ALL questions regarding the class should be sent to Cristina Lingway by using the following email: EcoTA2@ucf.edu
 - If the TA cannot answer the question, it will be *forwarded by the TA* to the instructor.
- Include in your email subject: course title (i.e., Ecology) and section number (0002)
- Include in your email: (1) your full name, (2) course title (i.e., Ecology) and (3) section number (0002-Donnelly)
- The TA will try to respond within 48 hours, but some response times may be longer. Please plan accordingly and do not wait until the last minute to contact us with questions or concerns.
- Grades must be discussed with the instructor by requesting a private conference on Webcourses.
- All e-mail communications must be from your Knight's E-mail addresses, any other emails will not receive a response per UCF policy.

Course Information

- Term: Fall 2020
- Course Number & Section: PCB 3044.0002
- Course Name: Principles of Ecology
- Credit Hours: 3
- Class Meeting Days: This semester will be primarily asynchronous and can be completed at your own pace. See class schedule for exam days. **Exam days are the only days students will be required to attend during scheduled time below.**
- Class Meeting Time: 4:30-5:50 pm
- Course Modality: V

Enrollment Requirements

Course Prerequisites: C or better in Biology II (BSC 2011C) and Chemistry Fundamentals 1 (CHM 2045C).

Course Description

This 3-credit course will examine the structure and function of ecological systems, including populations, communities, and ecosystems. Objectives for students include: (a) master major concepts and basic terminology of ecology, (b) understand how evolution and ecology complement each other, and (c) understand approaches of ecological study, including theory, observations, and experiments.

Course Materials and Resources

Textbook: Ecology 5th Edition by William D. Bowman; Sally D. Hacker; Publisher: Sinauer Associates, Sunderland, MA. Multiple versions and options for purchase and rent are available- purchasing the access code for the publisher site is recommended due to additional on-line content to support the virtual nature of this course.

- eTextbook option: ISBN: 9781605359236, 1605359238
- Print version ISBN: 9781605359212, 1605359211.

Internet Access and Webcourses: For Fall 2020, the mode of PCB 3044 will be V (video) and be conducted entirely on Webcourses. The majority of the semester is designed to be asynchronous and completed at your own pace. The only time you will be required to log-in to Webcourses will be on exam dates- all exams need to be completed during the designated time period (4:30 pm to 5:50 pm).

- Webcourses will be used for aspects of this class, including class related material and communication:
 - Course Syllabus
 - Weekly Modules
 - Videos of lecture
 - Exam review material
 - Weekly Quizzes, Participation Assignments
 - Announcements
 - To ensure that you receive important announcements, you are required to have your announcements setting turned on. You are responsible for information sent to students via Webcourses Announcements.
 - Grades for all course components

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the basic principles of ecology as a cornerstone of a broad background in biology.
2. Learn some of the basic ecological terminology.
3. Appreciate and apply the theoretical concepts of ecology and the experimental evidence supporting them.
4. Become familiar with the scientific method as applied to ecological studies.
5. Gain an appreciation of ecology as a science and its role in understanding the man-nature interaction.

Assessment and Grading Procedures

Assessment	Percentage of Grade
Participation	6%
Weekly Quizzes	6%
4 lecture exams (22% each)	88%
Total	100%

Final Course Grade Rounding Policy:

If your final total across all grading components is less than or equal to one percent below a higher grade, rounding up to the higher grade will occur only if you scored at the higher grade on 3 of the 4 exams. For example, if your overall course grade was an 89% and your exam scores were 84, 91, 92, and 93, your final grade will be rounded up to an A because three of the tests scored at 90 or above. If, however your exam grades were 85, 88, 92, and 94, the grade would remain a B+ because only 2 of your 4 exam grades were 90 or above. As there are many students in this class I strive for consistency and fairness. For this reason, there will be no exceptions to this policy and no other adjustments will be made. In other words, unless the above criteria are met, a 79.99 is still a 'C+' and no additional curving or extra credit will be offered.

Grading Scale:

A	90-100%
B+	87-89%
B	80-86%
C+	77-79%
C	70-76%
D+	67-69%

D	60-66%
F	<60%

*In compliance with FERPA, no grades will be given via email or phone

- - Students wishing to discuss their grades must request an appointment with Dr. Donnelly by email.
 - Grades will not be discussed with any individual (even parents) other than the student

Course Activity Details

Attendance Verification for Financial Aid Students

- Faculty are required to document student attendance/participation in this course so that financial aid monies are disbursed appropriately and in a timely manner.
- To document your attendance and participation in this course you are required to complete the [Academic Engagement Activity - Syllabus Quiz](#) in Webcourses no later than Friday, August 28th.
 - Failure to complete this quiz will result in the delay of your financial aid funds
 - This quiz is related to the lecture syllabus. Your score on this quiz will count as 1 pt towards your general participation grade (described below).

General Participation Grade (6% of semester grade)

- Your Participation grade will be evaluated based on responses to questions embedded in weekly video lectures and discussion postings. At the end of the semester, the lowest 2 participation grades will be dropped. Contact Dr. Donnelly if additional participation activities are missed; documentation may be required at the discretion of instructor for additional excused participations.
- Extra Credit: It is not necessary to respond correctly to participation questions to receive participation credit for a particular day, but correct responses will benefit your grade via extra credit added to your overall exam average. The maximum possible extra credit is 2%. Extra credit points missed for any reason cannot be made up under any circumstance.

Weekly Quizzes (6% of semester grade)

- There will be eleven online quizzes given through Webcourses, one per week except for the first week of classes and any week an exam is being given.
- Each quiz will consist of multiple choice questions and short-answer questions based on module content.

- These quizzes are intended to help you learn along the way. The quizzes are open-book and you will have 30 minutes to complete each quiz. Quizzes are open book but require prior preparation to successfully complete the quiz in the time allotted. If you are not satisfied with your grade on a quiz it may be taken a second time prior to the due date and the best score of the two will count.
- Your **lowest (1) quiz grade will be dropped** from your final grade.
- Quizzes will be open on **Mondays** and close at **11:59PM on Friday**.
- **Important: There are NO makeups or excused absences for missed quizzes** (unless a student can provide documentation affecting them longer than 1 week, e.g. extended hospitalization, sequestered jury duty, etc. that prevented computer access).
- If you miss taking a quiz, you will receive a zero (0) for that quiz's grade. Therefore, do NOT wait until the last minute to take the quiz.
- Technical or internet difficulties will NOT be accepted as an excuse for missing quizzes.
- Students are responsible for knowing the quiz due dates which can be found on Webcourses.
- **Two common problems with quiz submission you should note are:**
 - 1) Questions must be answered in order and you may not return to previous questions;
 - 2) Final submission of the quiz must occur prior to the 30-minute deadline or the computer will not accept it.

Lecture Exams (88% of semester grade)

- Four exams will be given throughout the semester on Webcourses during scheduled class time:
 - Exam 1: Monday, Sept. 21st, 4:30-5:50 pm
 - Exam 2: Monday, October 19th, 4:30-5:50 pm
 - Exam 3: Monday, Nov. 16th, 4:30-5:50 pm
 - Exam 4 (Final Exam Time): Monday, December 7th, 4 pm to 6:50 pm
- Each exam is worth 22% of final grade- **all exams count towards final grade**.
- Exam content is based on material covered in modules.
- Exams are open notes and open book, however, Lockdown browser will be required when taking the exam.
 - Review the information about LockDown Browser and download at: [https://cdl.ucf.edu/support/webcourses/respondus/download/Links to an external site](https://cdl.ucf.edu/support/webcourses/respondus/download/Links%20to%20an%20external%20site).
 - Once installed, test your browser with this practice quiz: [Lockdown Browser Practice Quiz- Requires Respondus LockDown Browser](#)
- Failure to take the exam during the assigned date and time will result in a zero (0) grade for the exam
 - Exams 1,2, and 3 will start on Webcourses promptly at 4:30 and you will have 80 minutes to complete.
 - Exam 4 will occur during scheduled final exam time for this course on Dec. 7th from 4:00 pm to 6:50 pm.
- Any students signing in late to the exam must complete the exam in the time remaining

Make-up Exams and Assignments

Per university policy, you are allowed to submit make-up work (or an equivalent, alternate assignment) for authorized university-sponsored activities, religious observances, or legal obligations (such as jury duty). If this participation conflicts with your course assignments, I will offer a reasonable opportunity for you to complete missed assignments and/or exams. The make-up assignment and grading scale will be equivalent to the missed assignment and its grading scale. In the case of an authorized university activity, it is your responsibility to show me a signed copy of the Program Verification Form for which you will be absent, prior to the class in which the absence occurs. Other absences may require documentation to be excused at the instructor's discretion. In any of these cases, please contact me ahead of time to notify me of upcoming needs.

Consult the latest Undergraduate or Graduate [catalog](#) for regulations and procedures regarding grading such as Incomplete grades, grade changes, and grade forgiveness.

Course Schedule

*****Important: The only official scheduled class times you are required to attend are the ones on exam dates listed below. You will be required to complete the exam on Webcourses on the designated Exam days listed below between 4:30-5:50 pm.**

Weekly modules will open on Mondays (with a few exceptions based on exam dates) and include lecture files and links to on-line resources associated with the topics included in the textbook chapters listed below. The modules are designed for you to complete at your own pace over the course of the week. On all weeks except exam weeks, quizzes will open on Monday with the module information and be due by 11:59 pm on Friday. Quizzes will test knowledge of material presented in the weekly module and associated textbook readings.

Weekly virtual office hours will be scheduled during class times and announced on the Webcourses homepage. Any changes to the schedule will be announced to the class through Webcourses.

Date	Module #	Lecture Topic	Book Chapter	Quizzes
Aug 24	0	Getting Started	1	Academic Activity Quiz Opens (due Friday, August 28th, 5 pm)
Aug 26	1	Introduction to Ecology		
Aug 31	2	The Biosphere and Physical Environment	2, 3	Quiz 1 opens
Sept 2				

Sept 7	3	Labor Day , Water, Temperature, and Energy	4, 5	Quiz 2 opens
Sept 9				
Sept 14	4	Evolution and Ecology	6	Quiz 3 opens
Sept 16				
Sept 21		Exam 1	Chapters 1-6	No quiz this week
Sept 23	5	Life History and Behavioral Ecology	7, 8	
Sept 28		Module 5 cont.		Quiz 4 opens
Sept 30				
Oct 5	6	Population Distribution and Abundance	9	Quiz 5 opens
Oct 7				
Oct 12	7	Population Growth, Regulation, Dynamics	10, 11	Quiz 6 opens
Oct 14				
Oct 19		Exam 2	Chapters 7-11	No quiz this week
Oct 21	8	Community Interactions	12 ,13,14,15	
Oct 26		Module 8 cont.		Quiz 7 opens
Oct 28				
Nov 2	9	Community Structure and Function	16, 17	Quiz 8 opens
Nov 4				
Nov 9	10	Biogeography and Community Diversity	18, 19	Quiz 9 opens

Nov 11		Veteran's Day		
Nov 16		Exam 3	Chapters 12-19	No quiz this week
Nov 18	10	Flow of Energy and Nutrients	20,21,22	
Nov 23	11	Landscape Ecology and Ecosystem Management	24	Quiz 10 opens
Nov 25		Thanksgiving Holiday Begins		
Nov 30	12	Global Ecology and Conservation	23, 25	Quiz 11 opens
Dec 2				
Dec 7		Exam 4 (4:00 pm -6:50 pm)	Chapters 20-25	

Study suggestions:

This is a fast-paced class covering multiple chapters each week. To succeed it is essential that you stay caught up by reading, attending lectures, and studying the material. Students who prepare for the exams by simply attending lectures and reading their notes several times are unlikely to succeed on the exams. Although the final exam is not cumulative, concepts build on each other and understanding one chapter is essential to understanding later chapters in this course. To succeed it is best to make your learning more active and focused. Active learning involves practicing the same skills you must perform on exams. In other words, quick recall of the appropriate information and applying it. To do this you should:

1. Treat studying like it's a job. Set a schedule, show up for work, pay attention (i.e. no multitasking) while on the job. A general rule of thumb is 2-3 hours for every hour of class.
2. Practice by Self-Testing. Make your own study questions: If you are like most people, you do not remember what you read/hear in sufficient detail to then be tested. However, it may be unclear which details you remember/understand and which you do not. The point in study questions is to figure out prior to an exam what you don't understand or have trouble remembering and work on that material. You do not want to realize during an exam that you don't understand something as well as you thought you did as it is now too late!

COVID-19 and Illness Notification

Students who believe they may have a COVID-19 diagnosis should contact UCF Student Health Services (407-823-2509) so proper contact tracing procedures can take place.

Students should not come to campus if they are ill, are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive for COVID, or if anyone living in their residence has tested positive or is sick with COVID-19 symptoms. CDC guidance for COVID-19 symptoms is located here: (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>)

Students should contact their instructor(s) as soon as possible if they miss class for any illness reason to discuss reasonable adjustments that might need to be made. When possible, students should contact their instructor(s) before missing class.

In Case of Faculty Illness

If the instructor falls ill during the semester, there may be changes to this course, including having a backup instructor take over the course. Please look for announcements or mail in Webcourses@UCF or Knights email for any alterations to this course.

University Services and Resources

Academic Services and Resources

A list of available academic support and learning services is available at [UCF Student Services](#). Click on "Academic Support and Learning Services" on the right-hand side to filter.

Non-Academic Services and Resources

A list of non-academic support and services is also available at [UCF Student Services](#). Click on "Support" on the right-hand side to filter.

If you are a UCF Online student, please consult the [UCF Online Student Guidelines](#) for more information about your access to non-academic services.

Policy Statements

[Academic Integrity](#)

Students should familiarize themselves with [UCF's Rules of Conduct](#). According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

- *Unauthorized assistance:* Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.
- *Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means:* The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.
- *Commercial Use of Academic Material:* Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.
- *Falsifying or misrepresenting* the student's own academic work.
- *Plagiarism:* Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.
- *Multiple Submissions:* Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.
- *Helping another violate* academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult [The Center for Academic Integrity](#).

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "[Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices](#)".

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, [The Golden Rule](#). UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade>.

Course Accessibility Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need specific access in this course, such as accommodations, should contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss various access options. Students should also connect with [Student Accessibility Services](#) (Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be

created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable.

Campus Safety Statement

Fully online course sections (W, V)

Though most emergency situations are primarily relevant to courses that meet in person, such incidents can also impact online students, either when they are on or near campus to participate in other courses or activities or when their course work is affected by off-campus emergencies. The following policies apply to courses in online modalities.

- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to <<https://my.ucf.edu>Links to an external site.> and logging in. Click on “Student Self Service” located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue “Personal Information” heading on the Student Center screen, click on “UCF Alert”, fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click “Apply” to save the changes, and then click “OK.”
- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need not make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

